

**Single Family Design Guidelines Update
Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance Update**

Steering Committee

**Meeting #27 Notes
July 22, 2005**

Steering Committee members: Chair Dianne Channing, Vice Chair Brian Barnwell, Bruce Bartlett, Joe Guzzardi, Vadim Hsu, Charmaine Jacobs, Bill Mahan, Helene Schneider, Richard Six.

Staff: Scott Vincent (Assistant City Attorney), Jaime Limón (Supervising Planner), Heather Baker (Project Planner), Jason Smart (Temporary Planning Technician I).

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Subcommittee Reports

- **Green Building Subcommittee**

Helene Schneider presented the Green Building Subcommittee's recommendations from its June 28th meeting.

Public comment:

Joe Andrulaitis: American Institute of Architects Santa Barbara chapter Vice President. Green building is great, but the City should "practice what it preaches" and achieve a LEED certification on all of its projects before asking homeowners to build green. Lead by example.

Toby Bradley: Santa Barbara Association of Realtors representative. Having green building incentives in the NPO is a good idea as long as they are incentives rather than requirements. Applicants should be moved up in the queue for ABR if they are doing green building. Don't provide incentives that aren't real. If administratively approved green building projects were required to have ABR Consent Calendar approval as well, the incentive would be ineffective because projects could then be subject to full board review. This would lead to neighborhood problems and worsen community feelings. It is better to have no incentives at all than to have a process in which the City gives something away and then takes it back.

Connie Hannah: The League of Women Voters supports green building and supports requiring houses over 4,000 square feet to do some degree of green building. It would help to defuse the issue if the City were to combine green building incentives with a City effort to further solar power use for its buildings.

Loretta Redd: Appreciates green building incentives because they save the builder time and money. Excluding second units from green building incentives would seem to disincentivize second units at a time when the City is trying to encourage them.

Motion (by Brian Barnwell): Support the Green Building Subcommittee's recommendations as listed in the June 28th meeting notes with the administrative review eligibility requirements for small additions in the Hillside Design District on page 2 corrected to read:

- < 17' tall &
- < 50% of 1992 sq.ft. &
- < 500 sq.ft. 1st flr. &
- "Green" &
- Not "highly visible" from public viewing locations &
- Grading only on project sites < 20% slope
- < 200 cubic yards of grading &
- Complies with retaining wall guidelines

Second: Bill Mahan.

All in favor.

- **FAR Subcommittee**

Bill Mahan presented the Subcommittee's recommendations from its July 14th meeting.

Public comment:

Joe Andrulaitis: It is disappointing that only two out of 27 Steering Committee meetings have been on Saturday. The Steering Committee is missing out on a lot of the possible public comment. The majority of the AIA Santa Barbara chapter's members feel that FAR restrictions are not necessary and should only be used as an ABR trigger. The FAR proposal has not changed much since the last discussion. 500-750 square foot second-story additions can have just as much impact on neighborhood compatibility as larger additions; they will still have massing effects on neighbors. The FAR proposal will not reduce the burden on ABR and will overwhelm Staff. Encouraging single-story additions will decrease open space, which conflicts with green building concepts. Planning staff is not qualified to approve projects. Paying ABR members to review projects would be better than hiring more design review staff. Creating FAR restrictions will lead to non-conforming issues that must be considered. There are many beautiful Victorian homes on the Upper Eastside that exceed the proposed FAR maximums. FARs should not apply to lots greater than 10,000 or 12,000 square feet because FARs become ineffective at that lot size. The definitions of what will or will not be included in FAR square footage calculations need to be less vague. The FAR proposal should be posted in the newspaper.

Toby Bradley: The FAR proposal will not be supported by many of the association's members. A 20 closest homes analysis would be unfair. The County Assessor's square footage information is not accurate. Applicants should not have to do extra work to prove that homes are larger than the Assessor's data indicates. If legal non-conforming homes cannot be expanded, a resident would not even be able to build a new bathroom. Residents should at least be able to rebuild after a disaster; otherwise, a lot of financing will be eliminated. The FAR proposal is a big

mistake, but the association will do its best to make it as good as possible and to ensure that issues such as legal non-conforming houses are addressed. [Scott Vincent, City Attorney's Assistant, clarified that legally non-conforming homes can be rebuilt to the same extent after a fire per Municipal Code 28.87.038.B¹]

Claudia Madsen: Presented written correspondence dated July 22nd. The proposed maximum FAR numbers are too high. The FAR Subcommittee has rejected strict standards for projects over 85% of the proposed maximum FAR such as compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and no modifications. As a compromise, modifications for projects over 85% of the proposed maximum FAR should be limited to quirky lots that are exceptionally difficult to develop and lots with non-conforming setbacks caused by previous City downzoning.

Connie Hannah: League of Women Voters representative. Presented written correspondence dated July 22nd. The proposed FARs are too high for small lots and should be reduced in order to preserve smaller, more affordable housing. The

¹ Municipal Code 28.87.038.B. Residential Structures. Any nonconforming building or structure used for residential purposes, which is damaged or destroyed by fire, flood, wind, earthquake or other calamity or act of God or the public enemy may be restored or rebuilt and the occupancy and use may be continued or resumed provided the following conditions are met:

1. The amount of inside space (square footage) shall not be greater than the amount which existed in the damaged or destroyed buildings;
2. The number of dwelling units shall be not greater than the number existing prior to the damage or destruction;
3. In R-3, R-4, R-O, C-1, C-2, and C-M zones, the number of bedrooms per dwelling unit shall not be greater than the number existing prior to the damage or destruction;
4. The building setbacks shall not be less than those which existed prior to the damage or destruction;
5. The number of parking spaces shall be no less than the number of parking spaces in existence prior to the damage or destruction;
6. The building, plot and landscaping plans shall be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Board of Review, or the Historic Landmarks Commission if the property is located within El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District or another landmark district or if the structure is a designated City Landmark, or the City Council on appeal, if such review would normally be required, except as allowed in this Section;
7. Any such reconstruction, restoration or rebuilding shall conform to all applicable adopted Uniform Codes in effect at the time of reconstruction, unless otherwise excused from compliance as a historic structure, pursuant to the Uniform Code for Building Conservation;
8. All permits required under building codes of the City shall be obtained. The Community Development Director or designee shall review and determine prior to issuance of said permits that the plans conform to the above;
9. Plans existing in the City's archives shall be used to determine the size, location, use, and configuration of nonconforming buildings and structures. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary above, if a property owner proposes to rebuild the building or structure in accordance with the City's archive plans, a building permit shall be the only required permit or approval. However, any exterior alterations shall be subject to design review, if such review would normally be required by the Santa Barbara Municipal Code. If plans do not exist in the City's archives, the City shall send a notice to all owners of property within 100 feet of the subject property, advising them of the details of the applicant's request to rebuild, and requesting confirmation of the size, location, use, and configuration of the nonconforming building that is proposed to be rebuilt. The public comment period shall be not less than 10 calendar days as calculated from the date that the notice was mailed.
10. The reconstruction, restoration or rebuilding shall commence within a period of one (1) year, and completed within two (2) years. The applicant shall demonstrate due diligence to complete the proposed reconstruction as determined by the Community Development Director. (Ord. 5072, 1998; Ord. 4851, 1994; Ord. 3916, 1977; Ord. 3915, 1977; Ord. 3710, 1974.)

League agrees with the FAR Subcommittee's recommendations for projects over 85% of the maximum FAR but thinks such projects should meet zoning, setback and open space requirements without zoning modifications. The League also supports encouraging ground-floor development and green building.

Mary Walsh: The house at 3408 Madrona Drive looks absolutely ridiculous, but its FAR is less than the currently proposed maximum.

Susan Trescher: La Mesa Neighborhood Association president. The City must allow modifications for homes that were made legally non-conforming by City actions such as downzoning. Such modifications should be routinely approved because they were necessitated by the City's actions. Strict standards should be met in order for projects to exceed 85% of the maximum FAR. Alan Greenspan recently said that real estate has become not about housing but about investing, but the housing bubble may burst here and nationwide. This process is becoming needlessly complex, and only experts may be able to get projects approved by the City. In California, adobe walls and tile roofs could be considered green building.

Michelle Giddens: Marine Terrace resident. I would hope to be able to remodel my home and live it in for the next 50 years. I don't want my house to stick out in the neighborhood, but I wouldn't want it to be exactly like the other homes on the street. Some streets have already had a lot of remodels whereas others haven't. Many of the people opposed to remodels have lived in the same home for decades, but we need to think of new families and the future. I currently own a 1,684 square foot single-story home. I'd like to add a second story that is 50% of the first-story size, plus a 500 square foot two-car garage at the back of the unit. That would be 3,026 square feet on an approximately 6,000 square foot lot with an FAR of approximately 0.5. I don't think that is unreasonable, although it would exceed the currently proposed FAR maximums.

Tim Harding: Citywide Homeowners Association member. I strongly agree with the comments of Joe Andrulaitis, Toby Bradley and Michelle Giddens. There has been no improvement in the FAR proposal presented today. The allowed sizes are too small. The 20 closest homes analysis is unfair and should not be implemented. There is no reliable home size information available, and a house with 20 non-remodeled homes around it will have different average square footage numbers than a house two blocks away where there have been more remodels. Story pole requirements are discriminatory and unfair because people with more money will be able to afford better surveys and get larger homes approved. The green building recommendations are a good idea.

Randy Mudge: I agree with the majority of the subcommittees' recommendations. This process should be as simple as possible, but it is not. I'm a huge proponent of green building and site design, but it adds a layer of confusion. If the city wants green building, it should not be merely an incentive for applicants who can afford it. Mandatory green building at the building permit level rather than as part of the design review process would level the playing field. A talented architect can design a 4,000-5,000 square foot house that consumes less energy than a 2,000 square foot home that is not green. This disparity is unfair. Permeable paving is good, but the

cumulative impacts of peak flows damage creeks most; therefore a net increase in the peak flow off a site should not be allowed. Cisterns and rain barrels help to limit peak flow. There is a large palette of Mediterranean plants that are appropriate to Santa Barbara but not native. If additions are limited to 50% of what existed in 1992, residents whose homes were smaller to begin with will be penalized. There should be increased second-story side yard setbacks in order to protect privacy. The 20 closest homes do not define the neighborhood. There needs to be good graphic examples of what is reasonable and acceptable, and applicants should have the latitude to provide additional information.

Motion (by Richard Six): Support the FAR Subcommittee's recommendations for projects over 85% of the draft proposed maximum FAR as listed in the July 14th meeting notes with the following addenda:

- A site visit by the ABR will be required. The site visit can be unorganized and conducted individually.
- The required finding shall be changed to read, "The project's architectural design quality and neighborhood compatibility are exemplary."
- A statement must be made in the minutes as to how the project is exemplary.

Second: Brian Barnwell.

8 in favor (Dianne Channing, Brian Barnwell, Bruce Bartlett, Joe Guzzardi, Vadim Hsu, Charmaine Jacobs, Bill Mahan, Richard Six); **1 absent** (Helene Schneider).

- **Hillside Routing Subcommittee**

Dianne Channing presented the Subcommittee's recommendations from its July 18th meeting.

Motion (by Bill Mahan): Accept the Hillside Routing Subcommittee's recommendations as listed in the July 18th meeting notes.

Second: Joe Guzzardi.

5 in favor (Dianne Channing, Joe Guzzardi, Charmaine Jacobs, Bill Mahan, Richard Six); **1 abstention** (Bruce Bartlett); **3 absent** (Brian Barnwell, Vadim Hsu, Helene Schneider).

III. Discuss Graphic Approach for Design Guidelines

Heather Baker announced that the City's contract with RRM Design Group was terminated and that a Request For Proposal for graphics will be issued.

A subcommittee was formed to discuss the graphics and layout of the revised Single Family Design Guidelines (SFDG). The subcommittee will consist of Dianne Channing, Charmaine Jacobs, Bill Mahan and Richard Six.

IV. Discuss Upcoming Schedule

Heather Baker announced the following:

- Staff will give a Work Program Status Report to City Council at its August 23rd meeting.
- Draft updated SFDG will be presented to the Steering Committee for review this fall.
- The updated NPO and SFDG are currently estimated to be adopted by City Council in summer 2006.